

I Can Problem Solve

Brief Program Description

I Can Problem Solve (ICPS) is a training program that is both preventive and rehabilitative. ICPS helps children to resolve interpersonal problems and prevent anti-social behaviors by teaching them how to think, not what to think. The ICPS training teaches the problem solving skills of perspective-taking, recognition of people's potential motivations for behavior, sensitivity to the existence of a problem as interpersonal and its causes, and listening and awareness skills. These and other prerequisite skills enrich children's ability to generate alternative solutions to real-life problems, anticipate potential consequences to an act, and plan sequenced steps to a stated interpersonal goal (means-ends thinking).

ICPS also trains teachers to engage in a problem solving style of communication (called ICPS dialoguing) when actual problems arise. Instead of telling, suggesting, or even explaining why a child should or should not do something, children are asked questions to define the problem, guide consequential thinking, and guide thought about the child's own and others' feelings. This approach gives children the skills and freedom to think and solve problems for themselves.

Program Strategies

The ICPS program is available in separate volumes for three developmental levels: preschool, kindergarten and primary grades, and intermediate elementary grades. The ICPS curriculum manuals are divided into two main sections: pre-problem solving skills, and problem solving skills. The curriculum involves: (1) formal lessons, (2) interaction in the classroom, and (3) integration into the academic curriculum.

Population Focus

The program is suitable for three developmental levels: preschool, kindergarten and primary grades, and intermediate elementary grades.

Suitable Settings

The intervention is suitable for school-based settings.

Required Resources

ICPS for Preschool, ICPS for Kindergarten and Primary Grades, or ICPS for Intermediate Elementary Grades.

Implementation Timeline

The interventions consist of thrice-weekly trainings over 4 months.

Outcomes

Major program outcomes included:

- Prior to preschool (in the Fall), 36% of the children to be trained were rated as behaviorally adjusted (not impulsive or inhibited), and 47% of the controls. Following the intervention in the Spring, 71% of the trained youngsters were rated as adjusted compared to only 54% of the controls. Eighty-three percent of the trained Kindergarten children were rated as adjusted when compared to 30% of the controls in Spring (Spring—K through 8).
- Of the 44 trained children rated as impulsive prior to the intervention and 39 controls, 50% of the trained were rated as adjusted after the intervention compared to 31% of the controls.
- Of the 28 initially inhibited trained children and 17 controls, 75% were rated as adjusted after the intervention compared to 35% of the controls.
- One full year later, with 30 trained and 27 controls, 77% were rated as adjusted after the intervention compared to 30% of the controls.

Contact Information

For indepth information on this program, please use the contact listed below.

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